

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims is to replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (currently amended) A method comprising:

2 receiving bill data; and

3 generating an email message with information including at least a portion
4 of the received bill data, wherein the amount of bill data included in the email
5 message is based, at least in part, on an email address of a recipient, and wherein
6 the recipient can be either a user or a non-user of a secure email system, wherein
7 the non-user has not registered for a service of the secure email system.

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9 2. (original) A method according to claim 1, further comprising:
10 sending the email message to the recipient.

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12 3. (previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the
13 step of generating comprises:

14 determining whether the recipient is a participant in a secure email network;
15 and

16 constructing the email message to include at least an address of where the
17 bill data may be confidentially viewed if the recipient is a non-user of the secure
18 email system.

1 4. (original) A method according to claim 3, further comprising:
2 constructing the email message to include substantially all of the bill data
3 along with financial Multipurpose Internet Multimedia Extensions (MIME)
4 elements which enable the recipient to manage a financial account.

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6 5. (original) A method according to claim 4, wherein the MIME
7 elements enable the recipient to pay all or part of the received bill.

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9 6. (original) A method according to claim 4, wherein the MIME
10 elements enable the recipient to establish and manage a financial account.

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12 7. (previously presented) A method according to claim 3, wherein the
13 step of determining comprises:

14 identifying a domain name from the email address; and
15 cross referencing the identified domain name against a list of secure domain
16 names to determine whether the recipient belongs to a secure email system.

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18 8. (original) A method according to claim 1, further comprising:
19 receiving the sent email message including at least a portion of the bill data
20 at the recipients email address; and
21 displaying at least a portion of the message in an inbox of an email client
22 used by the recipient to access their email account.

1 9. (previously presented) A method according to claim 8, further
2 comprising:

3 displaying the email message in the email client of the recipient, upon
4 recipient access of the email message, wherein the email message includes
5 financial Multipurpose Internet Mail Extension (MIME) elements that enable the
6 recipient to pay some or all of the received bill.

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8 10. (original) A method according to claim 8, further comprising:
9 paying some or all of the received bill by responding to the email

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11 11. (currently amended) A data network comprising:
12 a plurality of computing devices, coupled to the network, to facilitate
13 network access by one or more participants; and
14 an email server, coupled to the data network and responsive to one or more
15 of the plurality of computing devices, the email server including:

16 a storage medium to store at least one financial account for each of
17 the plurality of participants; and

18 a financial transaction manager, coupled to the memory device and
19 selectively invoked by a participant, to manage access to and manipulation
20 of financial account assets to effect requested financial transactions with
21 any participant or non-participant, wherein neither the non-participants have not
22 registered for a service of an email system supported by the email server.

1 12. (original) A data network according to claim 11, wherein the
2 financial account is electronically linked to an account of the participant at a
3 financial institution.

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5 13. (original) A data network according to claim 12, wherein the
6 account of the participant is one of a checking account, a savings account, a line of
7 credit, and a money market account maintained by a banking institution.

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9 14. (original) A data network according to claim 11, wherein the
10 financial account is one of a checking account, a savings account, a line of credit,
11 and a money market account maintained by a banking institution.

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13 15. (original) A data network according to claim 11, wherein the
14 computing devices are one or more of a personal computer, a personal digital
15 assistant, a kiosk, a telephone and a set-top box having sufficient resources to
16 enable the participant to access the data server and utilize the financial transaction
17 manager.

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19 16. (original) A data network according to claim 11, further comprising
20 an email system having a plurality of data servers including the data server.

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22 17. (original) A data network according to claim 11, wherein the data
23 server is controlled by a financial institution.

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1 18. (original) A data network according to claim 11, wherein the
2 financial transaction manager selectively transfers assets from a first participant's
3 account to a second participant's account in response to a request by the first
4 participant to transfer such assets.

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6 19. (original) A data network according to claim 18, wherein each of the
7 first and second participants are individual consumers, a business, or a
8 combination of each.

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10 20. (original) A data network according to claim 18, wherein the first
11 participant does not have a priori knowledge of the second participant's account
12 information, but identifies the second participant from a list of network
13 participants.

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15 21. (original) A data network according to claim 20, wherein the second
16 participant is identified by one of a name, an alias, or an email address.

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18 22. (original) A data network according to claim 11, wherein the
19 financial transaction manager selectively receives assets for deposit in an account
20 of a participant.

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22 23. (original) A data network according to claim 22, wherein the assets
23 are received from a brokerage at the request of the participant.

1 24. (original) A data network according to claim 22, wherein the assets
2 are received from an employer as compensation to the participant.

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4 25. (original) A data network according to claim 11, wherein the
5 financial transaction manager prompts a participant for payment authorization in
6 response to a request for payment received from a network service.

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8 26. (original) A data network according to claim 25, wherein the
9 network service is an electronic auction service.

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11 27. (original) A data network according to claim 25, wherein the
12 network service is an electronic retail service.

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14 28. (original) A data network according to claim 25, wherein the
15 financial transaction manager transfers assets from an account specified by the
16 user to an account specified in the request to cover the requested payment, upon
17 authorization of the participant.

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19 29. (original) A data network according to claim 28, wherein the
20 financial transaction manager determines whether to honor the participants
21 payment when the specified account has insufficient assets to cover the requested
22 payment.

1 30. (original) A data network according to claim 29, wherein the
2 financial transaction manager utilizes a growing trust model to determine whether
3 to honor the payment when the specified account has insufficient assets to cover
4 the requested payment.

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6 31. (original) A data network according to claim 29, wherein the
7 financial transaction manager automatically accesses a line of credit associated
8 with the participant to honor the payment when the specified account has
9 insufficient assets to cover the requested payment.

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11 32. (original) A data network according to claim 31, wherein the
12 financial transaction manager notifies the participant of the insufficient funds and
13 that the line of credit has been accessed to honor the requested payment.

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15 33. (original) A data network according to claim 25, wherein the
16 financial transaction manager issues an instruction to have a check issued and sent
17 to an address specified by the request, upon authorization of the participant.

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19 34. (original) A data network according to claim 33, wherein the issued
20 check includes a uniform resource locator (URL) address of a web page offered by
21 the data server where the recipient can establish an account.

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1 35. (original) A data network according to claim 34, wherein the check
2 includes an offer of free assets, credited to a newly established account created by
3 the recipient of the check.

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5 36. (original) A storage medium having stored thereon a plurality of
6 executable instructions which, when executed, implement a financial transaction
7 manager according to claim 11.

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9 37. (previously presented) An email system, selectively accessed by
10 users on a data network using a computing device, the email system comprising:

11 a user interface, through which a user accesses an account associated with
12 the user;

13 one or more data structures, to store and maintain account information for
14 each of the users; and

15 a financial transaction manager, responsive to the user interface and
16 coupled to the one or more storage devices, to manage access to and control assets
17 of user accounts in response to user interaction with the user interface to enable
18 the user to conduct financial transactions with another user or non-user of the
19 email system, wherein the non-user of the email system has not registered for a
20 service of the email system.

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22 38. (previously presented) An email system according to claim 37,
23 wherein the user interface is a series of instructions issued to a computing device
24 of the user to create a web page at the computing device.

1 **39.** (original) An email system according to claim 37, wherein the user
2 interface is a series of instructions issued to an email client executing on a
3 computing device of the participant.

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5 **40.** (original) An email system according to claim 37, wherein the
6 financial transaction manager selectively transfers assets from a first user's
7 account to a second user's account in response to a request by the first user to
8 transfer such assets.

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10 **41.** (original) An email system according to claim 37, wherein the
11 financial transaction manager causes a check to be printed and sent to another at
12 the request of a user.

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14 **42.** (original) An email system according to claim 41, wherein the check
15 includes an offer to create an account at the email system.

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17 **43.** (original) An email system according to claim 40, wherein each of
18 the first and second users are individual consumers, or businesses.

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20 **44.** (original) An email system according to claim 40, wherein the first
21 user does not have a priori knowledge of the second user's account information,
22 but identifies the second participant from a list of network participants provided by
23 the financial transaction manager.

1 **45.** (original) An email system according to claim 40, wherein the
2 second user is identified by one or more of the user's name, alias, or email
3 address.

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5 **46.** (original) An email system according to claim 37, wherein the
6 financial transaction manager selectively receives assets for deposit in an account
7 of a participant.

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9 **47.** (original) An email system according to claim 46, wherein the assets
10 are received from a brokerage at the request of the participant.

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12 **48.** (original) An email system according to claim 46, wherein the assets
13 are received from an employer as compensation to the participant.

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15 **49.** (original) An email system according to claim 37, wherein the
16 financial transaction manager prompts a participant for payment authorization in
17 response to a request for payment received from a network service.

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19 **50.** (original) An email system according to claim 49, wherein the
20 network service is an electronic auction service.

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22 **51.** (original) An email system according to claim 49, wherein the
23 network service is an electronic retail service.

1 52. (original) An email system according to claim 49, wherein the
2 financial transaction manager transfers assets from an account specified by the
3 user to an account specified in the request to cover the requested payment, upon
4 authorization of the participant.

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6 53. (original) An email system according to claim 52, wherein the
7 financial transaction manager determines whether to honor the participants
8 payment when the specified account has insufficient assets to cover the requested
9 payment.

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11 54. (original) An email system according to claim 52, wherein the
12 financial transaction manager utilizes a growing trust model to determine whether
13 to honor the payment when the specified account has insufficient assets to cover
14 the requested payment.

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16 55. (original) An email system according to claim 52, wherein the
17 financial transaction manager automatically accesses a line of credit associated
18 with the participant to honor the payment when the specified account has
19 insufficient assets to cover the requested payment.

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21 56. (original) An email system according to claim 25, wherein the
22 financial transaction manager issues an instruction to have a check issued and sent
23 to an address specified by the request, upon authorization of the participant.

1 57. (original) An email system according to claim 33, wherein the
2 issued check includes a uniform resource locator (URL) address of a web page
3 offered by the data server where the recipient can establish an account.

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5 58. (original) An email system according to claim 34, wherein the check
6 includes an offer of free assets, credited to a newly established account created by
7 the recipient of the check.

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9 59. (previously presented) A storage medium having stored thereon a
10 plurality of executable instructions which, when executed, implement a financial
11 transaction manager of an email system according to claim 37.

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